

Mississippi River Basin Panel (MRBP) On Aquatic Nuisance Species

FY 04 Accomplishment Report

January 31, 2005

Introduction

The Mississippi River Basin Panel (MRBP) on Aquatic Nuisance Species was formed in July 2003 at an organizational meeting held in Bloomington, MN. The second panel meeting was held in January 2004 in New Orleans, LA, and a third was held in May 2004 in conjunction with an ANS Task Force (ANSTF) meeting in Columbia, MO. Several panel members made formal presentations at that ANSTF meeting. Panel meeting attendance remains good at 37 in New Orleans and 40 in Columbia.

The MRBP covers the largest geographic area (all or portions of 31 states in the Mississippi River Basin) of any of the ANS Panels in the nation. The MRBP includes 47 official members plus alternates, and 21 other interested parties, including members representing 26 states and provinces and four sub basins (i.e. Upper Mississippi River, Lower Mississippi River, Missouri River, and Ohio River). The Panel has established a Web Site and maintains a Coordination Directory which is updated annually.

Priorities and Issues of Concern

Asian carp are the top basin-wide ANS problem, followed by the zebra mussel. Other priority species of sub-basins are: round goby, Eurasian milfoil, hydrilla, white perch, New Zealand mud snail, purple loosestrife, curly-leaf pondweed, and salvinia species.

Institutional issues of concern to the MRBP are:

- Development of state ANS plans,
- Increasing federal funding to implement plans already developed and those being prepared, and
- Increasing awareness and skills in conducting risk assessments due to the increasing need and the fact that there are a limited number of individuals that are qualified to complete them.

The panel developed and submitted the following recommendations to the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF) at their joint meeting in May:

- The ANSTF should place a high priority and strong focus on prevention — especially on introductions into the country, as well as on interstate, interbasin, and intrabasin spread of ANS. This is an issue of National concern because the States are limited in their ability to respond to international and interstate commerce issues as well as funding projects outside of their borders.
- The ANSTF and regional panels should continue to seek coordination across panels, such as joint meetings of adjacent panels with shared areas and finalizing standard operation procedures.
- National prohibitions (with listed exceptions) should be developed for the transport of aquatic plants and priority ANS on public roads.
- The ANSTF should establish a national contingency fund for rapid response.

MRBP Activities and Projects

The MRBP continued to use portions of its meetings to educate members on the various ANS problems across the Basin. Titles of formal presentations made include the following:

January 2004 Meeting

- *Impacts of Round Goby on Smallmouth Bass in Lake Erie* - Gary Isbell, Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- *Brief Update on Asian Carp Research* - Duane Chapman, USGS/BRD, Columbia, MO
- *White Perch* - Tom Mosher, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks
- *Distribution of ANS in the Basin and the Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Database* - Pam Fuller, USGS/BRD, Gainesville, FL
- *Bighead and Silver Carp Risk Assessment* - Cindy Kolar, USGS/BRD, La Crosse, WI
- *Asian Carp Feasibility Study* - Jay Rendall, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- *Development of a National Management and Control Plan for Asian Carp* - Michael Hoff, UFWS, Twin Cities, MN
- *Ballast Water Management Requirements* - CWO John Meyers, U.S. Coast Guard, New Orleans, LA
- *Overview of Pathways in Louisiana* - Rich Campanella and Aleshia Kravits, Center for Bioenvironmental Research and Tulane and Xavier University
- *Nutria History and Control in Louisiana* - Ed Mouton, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- *Invasive Aquatic Plants in Louisiana* - Scott Longman, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

May 2004 Meeting

- *A Survey of State Policy Regarding Non-Indigenous Crayfish Management*, Bobby Wilson, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
- *Bigheaded Carps, Genus Hypophthalmichthys (Pisces: Cyprinidae): Status of Biological Synopses and Risk Assessments* - Cindy Kolar, USGS/BRD La Crosse, WI

The panel has also formed three committees. These committees (listed below) have begun to sort out and identify their responsibilities, develop individual work plans, and project budget needs. Examples of committee projects include the following:

Information and Education Committee Projects

- Identify products, messages, audiences
- Coordinate with other panels
- Inventory of Information and Education products on ANS
- List regulated invasives in each state
- Encourage additional states to conduct model boater surveys

Research and Risk Assessment Committee Projects

- Develop a database of experts and current research
- Conduct a risk assessment workshop at the next MRBP meeting
- Develop a research priority list
- Sponsor a symposium on ANS research at the 2005 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference

Prevention and Control Committee Projects

- Develop a list of priority species/matrix status
- Prepare a position statement on barriers and fish passage
- Prepare an ANS harvest issue paper
- Develop a position statement supporting a national screening process for intentional importation into United States
- Request clarification of the Lacey Act from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Summary of Committee Activities

Education and Outreach Committee (EOC)

The EOC Chairman, Steve Schainost (NE) encountered difficulty with health issues in 2004, and EOC leadership was passed between Byron Griffith (EPA) and Marilyn Barret O'Leary (Louisiana Seagrant) until Schainost could return to duty. This caused Committee activities to be somewhat hampered

Research and Risk Assessment Committee (RARC)

Cindy Kolar (USGS), Chairperson, worked with her Committee to develop short and long term goals. Committee members also developed a repository for information and late breaking news, etc., and are developing a list of potential funding sources to add to the MRBP Web Site. The Committee is also making plans to host a workshop on risk assessment, which will bring people together who are experts in the field. Over the next several years the Committee would also like to host a symposium on ANS issues in the Basin. The Committee is also planning to develop a pathways analysis to identify areas of concern, to determine which species are of most concern, and to develop methods of looking at Asian carp population recruitment. The Committee also recognizes the need to develop information on control strategies. One strategy might be to investigate the use of locks and dams to slow the spread of invasives. The Committee is also interested in developing more information on the economics of invasives. More information is also needed on the location and distribution of invasive species and when the invasion of an area occurred. The USGS database will be used to determine the latter, and the Panel will assist in keeping it updated.

Prevention and Control Committee (PCC)

Kim Bogenschutz (IA), Chairperson, worked with her Committee to begin prioritizing ANS for prevention, containment and control within the basin and sub basins using input from the four sub basins. The Committee plans to develop a matrix for which species can be controlled and contained. The Committee recognizes the need for development a Rapid Response Plan and will work with the RARC on this issue. The Committee supports the work of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in development of the Asian Carp Management Plan, and hopes to identify tools to control ANS through an integrated pest management plan, and to facilitate a monitoring plan for the basin. The Committee will assist the RARC with development of pathways, and will develop its own ANS issue papers (i.e. fish passage, marketability of Asian carp, etc.) providing that information to the ANSTF. The Committee will encourage the states to respond to federal notices, and plans to develop a policy on species introductions, relying on support from the RARC and EOC, and to eventually develop a Clean Species List. The Committee also plans to recommend improvements to state ANS regulations, and to encourage the states to participate in NAISA reauthorization. The Committee will also promote regulations prohibiting transport of ANS on public roads, and encourage the states to support panel activities

MRBP Expenses and Budget Needs

Projected completion dates for committee work plan activities are all subject to change, as it must be understood that the chair persons and committee members all have full time jobs with their respective state or agency, and committee activity doesn't always meet the highest priority need or those states or agencies. However, committee activity is expected to increase shortly as projects begin to come together. Funding needs are also anticipated for Committee and Panel meetings, and some members will continue to require full or partial reimbursement for travel expenses to Panel and Committee meetings.

Actual expenses for FY 04 and projected expenses for FY 05 are shown below:

MRBP Expenditures FY 04

Travel	13,974.42
Meeting Expenses	3,563.49
Office Supplies	2,487.43
Printing and Publications	3,510.04
Overhead	5,000.00
In Kind Staff Support	<u>50,000.00</u>
Total	\$78,535.38

Budget Needs FY 05

Travel	\$25,000.00
Meeting Expenses	9,000.00
Office Supplies	5,000.00
Contractual	56,000.00
Overhead	<u>5,000.00</u>
Total	\$100,000.00